

Halo: Reach Recovery

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Summary: A small UNSC spec ops team, codenamed Project Freelancer, is about to get its time to shine when they discover an alien invasion of the Planet Reach. With the addition of their new number six and help from local troopers, they just might survive...or not.

Halo: Reach Recovery

**First off let me humbly admit this is not my idea. Someone else thought of this before I did, but I forget their name and I can't seem to find the fic itself either. But I really liked it and I figured I'd do my own version.**

**Halo: Reach belongs to Bungie. Halo belongs to Microsoft and 343. The reds and blues and Freelancers all belong to RoosterTeeth, blah blah blah. You get the point.**

_**I modified all of their armors to go with their roles, and I use the Reach armory for their armor pieces. Their weapons however, are pulled from all of the games. Why? Because the concussion rifle is a scourge and the brute shot has a big pizza cutter on the end
^_***_

**WARNING: Contains occasional swearing**

"We lost contact with Visegrad relay two days ago. Trooper fireteams sent in have since been declared MIA," Command explained.

"And now you're sending us," Washington noted. He couldn't help but wonder what would happen if his team couldn't pull this off. Who would they send in next, after them? But he quickly pushed those thoughts out of his head. His team would get it done, there would be no one else going in after them.

"The Chairman believes deployment of a Freelancer Team is a gross misapplication of valuable resources, especially a team of such a

high caliber. But the Director disagrees."

"Anyone claim responsibility for the attack?" Washington asked.

"Freelancer Command believes it could be the local sim troopers. Two months ago a similar incident occurred in Valhalla. Comms were taken out in a firefight, and by the time connection was reestablished, everyone was dead. That cannot happen here, Reach is too important."

"Right," Washington agreed. "You know, in hindsight, you probably shouldn't have set up simulation troopers right next to our only interplanetary comms relay. Just saying."

"We need that relay back online Agent Washington. Can your team get it done or not?"

"Consider it done," Washington promised, signing off from the conversation with command. Sometimes, the decisions Project Freelancer made were just ridiculous. Like putting together this team.

Sure, Freelancers didn't usually work alone. They went in pairs and on rare occasions trios. But six Freelancers? And all of them of such high caliber? It made them a force to be reckoned with sure, but they'd never been sent on a job that any one of them couldn't handle alone.

Well, five now. Washington could still hear the tortured cries of Agent Carolina, as her twin AIs and the stress of combat all finally broke through her. She'd wound up in a coma, and all the doctors confirmed she would never wake up.

"Wash," South called, interrupting the Freelancer's thoughts.

Agent Washington turned around to see South standing in front of a female soldier, completely clad in black Mark VI armor. Her helmet was on, and it was impossible to tell what she was thinking. Her body language offered no clue. When she moved, her movements were fluid and precise.

"So that's our new number six?" North asked.

Agent Maine looked up from sharpening the bayonet on his prized Brute Shot, just one of his many pieces of weaponry that he had acquired from who knows where. He scanned over the new arrival, and only gave a grunt in response before getting back to work.

"South, you read her file?" North asked. South was usually the teams go to person for information. She had a bad habit of looking through files she "accidentally" openedâ€¦by cracking three layers of security.

This time though, proved to be different. "Only the parts that weren't covered in black ink and blood."

"Freelancer Agent Texas, reporting for duty sir," Texas introduced to Washington.

"I'm Agent Washington, Recovery Team's leader. That's South, Recovery Two and Wyoming, Recovery Three. Over there is Maine and North, Recovery Four and Five. You're riding with me Recovery Six," Washington said.

"Tex will do just fine sir," she told him.

Washington nodded. "Alright then 'Tex'. I prefer Wash over sir anyway."

The squad all pulled on their helmets as they marched out of their command tent and over to the waiting Falcons. North and South climbed into a Falcon along with Maine while Wyoming climbed into the same Falcon as Tex and Washington.

North wore purple and green armor, standard grade for the most part, with the exception of his shoulder pads and knee guards which were of the grenadier variant. Secured to his hips were submachine guns, and on his lap sat a heavy machine gun.

South had a light shade of purple, also with green trim. She wore recon shoulder armor and tactical recon gear attached to her chestpiece. A battle rifle was on her back, and in her hands was a locked and loaded M6D pistol.

Agent Maine wore white and gold EVA armor with a specialized breacher chest piece that held extra shotgun rounds. A bandolier to carry even more shotgun rounds was attached to his left forearm, and a soft case was secured onto his leg that no doubt, contained even more ammo. In his hands was the shotgun that would be using all of that ammo, and on his back was the large, menacing brute shot.

Wyoming wore a tactical patrol chest modification, and shoulder plates holding extra sniper rounds adorned both his shoulders. His armor was stark white and a GPS was attached to his wrist. He carried a sniper rifle, but had an SMG ready to go on his hip.

Washington himself had mostly standard grey and yellow armor with command network module on his helmet and grenadier knee guards. He had a battle rifle on his back and an assault rifle in his hands.

"I'm not gonna lie to you Tex, you're stepping into some shoes the rest of the team would rather leave unfilled," Washington explained as they climbed into their ride. "That includes me, but as long as the team's up to full strength and you don't cause trouble I won't complain."

"One last thing," Washington added. "I read your file Tex, even the parts the Director didn't want me too. You're a hell of an agent, but we're a team. That lone wolf stuff stays behind."

"We'll see," Tex said non challantly. She doubted Washington had read all her files, because Tex knew there were four versions of it. In order of decreasing accessibility, there was the heavily censored incomplete, the uncensored incomplete, the heavily censored complete, and the uncensored complete. Only the Director, the Counselor, and herself knew the last one even existed.

"Welcome to Reach," Wyoming offered as they took off.

* * *

><p>"Shutdown attempts are likely, so keep your distance," Washington warned the pilot.<p>

"Whatever you say boss," the pilot responded.

"I mean it Four-Seven-Niner, I do _not_ want a repeat of what happened back on Harvest," the freelancer warned.

"Aw bite me," she responded. "Besides, it's just a bunch of sim troopers anyway. What are they going to do to us?"

Agent Maine gave a low growl in warning, which saved Washington from having to remind the pilot that even sim troopers could be dangerous. And this was a much bigger group of them than one would usually see. Obviously, enough to knock out a relay outpost.

"Alright, put us down on the sandbar," Washington instructed. "Wyoming, stay onboard I want you watching from the air."

"Straight away old chap," Wyoming assured.

"I'm going to assume that translates as 'Yes sir' for my own sake," Washington groaned. He swore, Wyoming's drawl got very, very annoying some times.

"Actually sir, I think he's flirting with you," South joked over the radio. The entire squad, with the exception of Wash and Wyoming, laughed. Even Maine gave his deep throated chuckle.

"Is that jealousy I hear Two?" Tex teased South. Now it was South's turn to be flustered and everyone else's to laugh again. Wyoming nodded approvingly at Tex's banter. Already, she was fitting right in with the rest of them. Maybe their new six would work out after all.

As Wyoming and the two falcons flew off, the remainder of Recovery Team gathered on the sandbar, banter subsiding for now.

"Head through the cave up ahead, keep your eyes peeled," Wash ordered. The team clicked weapon safeties off in sync. "Move out."

The five of them moved up the beach and through the dark cave ahead without encountering any kind of trouble.

"Recovery beacon near the outside of the cave everyone," Wyoming warned. "Might want to see to that if it isn't too much a bother."

"Understood, we'll check it out," Washington responded. "Tex, Maine, break off and check out that beacon. Could be the missing troopers. North and South, stay on me. We'll rendezvous at the top of the canyon."

"Yes sir," the team chorused.

"Hey Maine, try not to eat this one," North joked.

South laughed audibly over the radio. Tex joined along briefly, then set up a private channel with Washington. "He _is _joking right?"

"Huh? Yeah sure," Wash replied unconvincingly.

"Oh. Great," Tex muttered. She turned to Maine, who'd already switched to his Brute shot and was stalking off in the direction of the recovery beacon. The new Recovery Six sighed, and followed along.

* * *

><p>"Distress beacon's not far from here," Tex reported to silent partner. "Come on, let's move."<p>

Maine growled a reply, which Tex couldn't understand. What was with this guy, did he gargle nails as a kid or something? She'd have to ask the rest of the Team when she got the chance.

They made a brief hike up the hill, and pained cries reached the ears of both freelancers. "God damn itâ€|argh, son of a bitch that hurtsâ€|"

Tex aimed her DMR, and Maine growled as he readied his brute shot. Tex raised two fingers to her helmet where her lips would be, urging him to stay quiet. Maine then watched as Tex slowly faded out of view, vanishing completely. Maine switched to thermal, and Tex's silhouette reappeared once more. Now _that _was an armor enhancement.

Tex silently padded along, following the sound of the obviously wounded man. When she rounded a large rock to the find the source of the recovery beacon though, what she saw shocked her out of camouflauge.

Laying in the dirt, blood dripping from holes in his cobalt armor, a sniper rifle and helmet at his side was someone Tex would recognize anywhere. He had dark hair, bright blue eyes, and his face was covered in stubble and five o'clock shadow. He was Private Leonard L. Church, a simulation trooper catergorized into the Blue Army.

"Church?" Tex asked in shock.

The blue sim trooper looked up at her, confused at first. "Who the, how do you know my name? Waitâ€|I know that voiceâ€|Tex? Isâ€|is that you?"

Tex flicked on her radio without giving it a second thought. "Wyoming, we've got the source of the beacon. Wounded trooper, needs evac now."

"Then we've got a bit of a problem Tex, we've got more important things to do than round up stray simulation troopers," Wyoming reminded her. "The relay still needs to be brought back online."

"Tex, find out what that trooper knows and regroup with the rest of

us," Washington instructed. "Make it quick."

"He needs medical evac," Tex insisted again, ignoring both Wyoming and Wash.

"We'll have command send one in then," Wash told her. "_After _the mission is finished."

"Hey assholes," Church piped up. "We're all on the same radio frequency. I can _hear _you."

Maine growled at Church, but the sim trooper boldly threw the bird at the Freelancer. Maine growled again in anger, and loaded a belt of grenades into the brute shot. Church glared at him, his face daring the EVA Freelancer to fire.

"Sir, he's a level zero patient," Tex informed him. "And he needs evac. _Now_."

"Level Zero? You're serious?" South asked. The last level zero had been Maine, when the sim troopers had gotten him in the throat. Level zero was a priority higher than any other for medical emergency. It was reserved for extreme injuries, VIPs, and lives that could not be lost under any circumstance.

"Faking a Level Zero is punishable with death Agent Texas," Washington warned sternly.

"Take it up with the Director," Tex told him. "Wyoming, where's that air lift?"

"No need to get your knickers in a twist, I'll be there in two shakes of a lambs tail," Wyoming assured. Already, Tex could hear the rotors of the approaching Falcon. But it wasn't fast enough for her.

"Tex, what's going on?" Church asked, trying to get up.

Tex lightly pushed him back down. "Easy, easy. We're getting you out of here. Church, you need to tell me what happened."

Church must have been fading, because he only responding with incoherent mutters and murmuring. Tex groaned and grabbed him by the shoulder, trying to shake him back into a useful state. He only moaned, unable to get himself back together.

"Church, Church what happened? What happened to the comm relay?" Tex pressed.

"Iâ€|theyâ€|w-we wereâ€|.the Redsâ€|" Church's eyes were getting a thousand yard stare. He squeezed them shut and let out a long breath, trying to recompose. "The Redsâ€|they had us pinned downâ€|the rookie was going for the tankâ€|we never saw them comingâ€|"

"Hang in there Church," Tex said, her voice wavering with worry. Maine grunted something Tex was half sure was a question. Not sure what it meant, Tex came up with the meaning in her head. "Shut up."

Maine gave a chuckle, and left to sweep the area around them. Tex returned her attention to Church, who was still in bad shape.

"Stay with me Church," Tex pleaded. "Hang in there. Church, where's the rest of your unit?"

"Weâ€|w-we got separated," Church tried to explain. "They broke off along with the Redsâ€|it sounded bad on the radio."

The wind whirled and Tex helped Church into Wyoming's Falcon. Church stretched out a hand to her, and collected himself as he tried to get out one last sentence. "Tex Iâ€|"

"You're gonna be okay Church," Tex interrupted. Church nodded, forgetting what he was going to say, instead, he only murmured, "Be careful."

Tex watched the Falcon take off as a cold shiver traveled up her spine. It had been a long time since she'd last seen Church. He was different. Less arrogant and angry for one. Or maybe that was just the blood loss.

Maine walked up beside her, joining her in watching the Falcon as it quickly vanished out past the walls of the canyon. He looked to her, and growled a question.

"Yeah, I know him," Tex answered. Another growl. "No actually, I don't. C'mon, the rest of the team is waiting."

Maine groaned and followed her. He had no clue what she thought he'd been trying to say, but her answers didn't at all match the questions he'd asked. It was worse than speaking a foreign language. He could understand them perfectly, but no one else alive knew what _he _was saying.

It was annoying on good days, and on bad daysâ€|the bayonet on the Brute Shot got good use. Poor bastards in the Freelancer base could never see it comingâ€|

* * *

><p>"Learn anything from the 'Level Zero' Wash asked her once she and Maine regrouped with the others.<p>

"Nothing we haven't already figured," Tex reported as the five man team moved into the canyon itself. "Red and Blue simulation troopers in a firefight that got out of hand. If you want my educated guess based on what I found out, there aren't any Blues left in this canyon."

Maine growled an input. Tex shot him a look, "Yeah well no one asked you."

Maine sighed, giving up his attempts at communication.

"Hey, if no one minds my asking, what makes some random simulation trooper worth a Level Zero medical evac anyway?" North asked suddenly.

"Yeah, what makes him so special?" South asked in a somewhat irritated tone. She was still spiteful over the Carolina incident, how the docs and medics had fed them bullshit and let their friend

slip into a coma, how a single insane Freelancer was only important enough to be designated a Level Two medical priority. Yes, South had little love for medics and their damn levels.

All eyes either fell on Tex or stayed focused ahead, depending on whether their focus was their easy mission or an interesting mystery—so yes, all eyes were on Tex. She looked around at everyone's faceplate before giving in to peer pressure.

"That simulation trooper—he has a close relation to the Director," she explained. "A—_very _close relation."

Maine growled.

"No not like that."

Maine at this point wanted to strangle Tex for continuing to (incorrectly) assume what he was trying to say.

"Like what?" North asked.

"Ask the pink one," Tex said simply.

"It's not pink," South hissed through clenched teeth, "it's _lavender_."

"Look Sister, I may not be the girliest cheerleader on campus, but I know pink when I see it," Tex said. Maine chuckled. "But if you want to point out being colorblind, that's fine by me."

"I—ugh!" South stammered. Still fuming about the pink crack, she immediately began hacking into the Freelancer Command database to dig up what she could. The team waited patiently (not really) for her to give them some answers.

"The Director's too old to be his brother, he never married, and his journal only mentions one girlfriend. Too big a jerk to have any friends, especially young friends. No direct family that hasn't been killed by the Covies," South said.

"You're scary sometimes, you know that?" Wash asked.

"I give up, how's that trooper connected to the Director?" South asked.

"Let's just say—they think alike," Tex told her evasively. The entire squad groaned at their newest member for leaving them with a cliffhanger.

"Team, I've got heat signatures in the structure not far from your current location. I suppose it's worth taking a look at," Wyoming's voice reported over the radio.

"Wyoming what are you still doing here, you're supposed to be transporting the patient to medical," Tex interrupted.

"Calm down now Texas, the little blue boy has been safely transferred and should be well on his way to recovery in due time. Or he could expire from blood loss, hard to tell."

"Up yours Wyoming," Tex shot curtly.

"Awful protective of that trooper, aren't ya Tex?" South prodded. She meant it as a joke to get back at her for the comment about her and Wash, but Tex seemed to take it very seriously.

"Don't even go there," was the only warning Tex needed to give.

"You two, cut it," Wash ordered. "Thanks for the tip Wyoming, we'll check it out."

"Good hunting Recovery Team," Wyoming offered. "I do wish I could be there with you. Oh well, best of luck and all the rubbish."

"Sometimes he makes about as much sense as you," North joked to Maine. The EVA Freelancer grunted in annoyance. North glared at Maine. "Oh yeah? Well so's you're mother!"

__**And fade to black. I tried to make this fan neutral, accessible to both RvB and Halo fans. BUT the following comments are universe specific:**__

__**To RvB Guys & Gals: Did I keep everyone in character? I tried, I really did. I'm most worried about how I did with Texâ€|To **__

__**To Halo Addicts: Is anyone else mad that all other Halo pistol are nothing compared to the CE version? Yeah, that's why South uses the D variant.**__

__**To Everyone: What did you think?**__

End
file.